



To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

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Contact Anne Fitzgerald
800.282.8685 (DE only)
302.698.4520
302.242.4092 (Cell)

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DDA Spay/Neuter Pilot Program A begins today

Today, the Delaware Department of Agriculture announced the launching of Spay/Neuter Pilot Program A (Program), under the auspices of the State Veterinarian's Office. Too many people, for a variety of reasons, do not have their pets spayed or neutered and this has ultimately produced an explosive population growth of animals in Delaware and across the nation. Too many of the animals are unwanted and abandoned. They become free roaming strays that often inflict injuries to humans and threaten the public health and safety (e.g. from rabies and vehicular accidents). Others are simply left at animal shelters where, if they are not adopted, they will be euthanized. Increasing the number of animals spayed or neutered in Delaware will significantly reduce the number of animals being euthanized in Delaware.

Often people who suffer economic hardship do not have their pets spayed or neutered because they cannot afford the cost. The Program is geared toward helping income-eligible Delawareans pay for spay/neuter procedures by Program veterinarians. Delaware residents who are income-eligible may apply for funding assistance from the proceeds of the Spay/Neuter Fund.

The Program is authorized by Delaware law (HB 425) signed on June 29, 2006. Development of the Program began on June 25, 2007 with the hiring of a Spay/Neuter Program Coordinator. Initial spay-neuter seed funding assistance came from a FY 2007 appropriation. Subsequent Program funding will be derived from a mandatory \$3.00 surcharge that was added to each rabies vaccine administered in Delaware on and after September 1, 2006.

During Pilot Program A, in keeping with the legislation, seventy-five percent of the funds will be dedicated to subsidizing the cost of sterilizing Delaware domesticated animals owned by income-eligible Delawareans. The funds will be paid to participating veterinarians for each spay or neuter procedure performed on animals owned by income-eligible people. Twenty-five percent of the funds will be dedicated to subsidizing the Kent County SPCA's cost of sterilizing abandoned/free-roaming/homeless/stray/unwanted animals

For Spay/Neuter Pilot Program A the eligibility requisites are:

- (1) a person must be an adult (18 years or older); and
- (2) be a resident of the State of Delaware; and
- (3) be the owner or keeper of the cat or dog being spayed or neutered by a participating veterinarian or the Kent County SPCA and shall:

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- a. establish proof of being a recipient of one (1) of the following programs:
 - (i) AFDC
 - (ii) Food Stamps
 - (iii) General Assistance
 - (iv) Medicaid
 - (v) Social Security Disability (SSD)
 - (vi) SSI
 - (vii) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - (viii) WIC; and
- b. establish further proof of identity through photo identification;

Income-eligible Delawareans may apply for spay/neuter assistance for their animals as follows:

DDA Spay/Neuter Program
2320 South Dupont Highway
Dover, Delaware 19901

Phone: (800) 282-8685 (DE only)
(302) 698-4500
Fax: (302) 697-6287

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